TORONTO:
A CITY FOR CHILDREN

VINCE PIETROPAOLO

"the child, at birth, bears with him constructive possibilities which must unfold by activity in his environment"

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"Although we believe that the family remains the most appropriate environment for the child's upbringing, it is clear that the family occupies a radically different role in society than it did in the past. Child-rearing today is no longer a collective responsibility. As family members are dispersed to different places, the extended family has become increasingly rare. Our sense of community has been so diminished that we are fortunate if something akin to a feeling of neighbourhood can even be weakly approximated. In the past, work, education and family roles virtually coincided. Now these roles have become so highly separated that they are played in worlds that are separate and even largely invisible to one another.

Because of these shifts within society, we must now find new ways to support the family so that it can cope with the everchanging demands of a highly complex society. We believe that the current circumstances and the future life chances of our children will be determined by society's willingness to respond to the emerging needs of the family."(*1)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report reviews the conditions within which children live in the City of Toronto, both from a theoretical and from a practical perspective. The basic premise of this report is that the healthful development of children to their full potential is essential to the vibrant well-being of society. The report details the variety and complexity of obstacles which families with children face in contemporary urban society.

As discussed in this report, children in the City have "needs over and above the norms". In addition, while the City's population has declined in the past decade, the rate of decline of children in the City is much higher than the overall decline (eg., 1976-1981: 5.38 per cent decline in total population; 17.37 per cent decline in children aged 0-19 years). Finally, the social and physical environments of contemporary urban society creates many obstacles to normal, healthy child development.

Virtually all children are born with the potential to develop to fully-functioning adulthood. Some children have more advantages than others; some children face more obstacles than others. It is time for the City of Toronto to reinforce its international reputation as "The City That Works" by providing the leadership to ensure that all children in the City of Toronto get equal opportunities to develop to their full potential.

This report sets out ten basic principles for the necessary reorientation of services for families with children in order to meet the needs and pressures created by contemporary urban society. These are drawn from research in the field of preventive intervention for the well-being of urban children. It is noted that:

1. "When families are doing well, young children thrive."

2. "The family occupies a radically different role in society than it did in the past."

3. "A major reason for inadequacies in public programmes for children is the abiding belief that primary responsibility rests ... upon parents ... The fact is that many families ... cannot bear this burden unaided."

4. 'Risk' to the child has "a high probability of occurring in situations where parents are socially isolated or very weakly connected to others in the local area ..."

5. "When families are threatened, we do well to worry over the quality of life for young children."

6. "The situation is undoubtedly especially unfavourable for children in dense, central-town living areas ..." (such as are found in many parts of the City of Toronto) because children require "growing room."

7. "The City should open out to these children."

8. "... We must now find new ways to support the family so that it can cope with the everchanging demands of a highly complex society."

The work of these "great child helpers" is based on the notion that improving conditions for children means that conditions will, ipso facto, be improved in society-at-large. Families with children can only function well in a community of some sort. By making the City of Toronto the best possible place for families with children to live, City Council is taking an important step along the path of turning the diverse ethno-cultural and socio-economic neighbourhoods of the City into real communities of neighbours.

The recommendations which flow from this report are based on the two years of intensive work and consultation by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services. These recommendations attempt to tackle several thorny problems:

- co-ordination between agencies and departments at the service delivery level;

- maximization of available resources in a climate of social service fiscal restraint; and

- providing essential support services to a very diverse population of families with children in a manner which emphasizes common interests and concerns, and which accepts that very diversity as a strength.

This report identifies an initial five point programme to begin improving the City for families with children.

1. A policy statement which establishes a responsible body: the Toronto Children's Services Network, and which recognizes that "specific attention and priority to the ... needs of all families with children in the City ... is essential to the social fabric of this municipality".

2. Highest overall priority is directed towards meeting the needs of families with young children (aged 0-5 years). The creation of multi-public-service "Family Centres" which would provide an integrated set of programmes, services and referrals, within an accessible neighbourhood milieu (local school, library, community centre or church) is proposed as a

means of overcoming the real problems of alienation and isolation experienced by many young families.

3. A comprehensive child safety and security programme is proposed primarily for children aged 5-12. This would include education of parents, children and direct-service workers on street safety; co-operation with police, transit and other officials to establish clear and well-known routines for dealing with lost children; and, the expansion of the Block Parent or other similar citizen-based programme.

4. Development of increased pre-employment and employment opportunities for youth in the City. This would include an Affirmative Action approach in regard to the City's many socio-economically disadvantaged young people.

5. An implementation and evaluation process which is designed to combine political, staff and community resources in a respectful, balanced and productive manner.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Dr. Howard Andrews, from the Centre for Urban and Community Studies (Child-in-the-City Programme) at the University of Toronto, in the preparation of this material.

I would also like to acknowledge and credit the membership of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, in particular the late Millie Shime, who are the real architects of the plan to make Toronto a City for Children.

Let's make Toronto a city which works well for families with children. It is the first step towards building a real City of communities from which all residents will benefit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That City Council adopt the following resolution:

   "Whereas the vibrant presence of families with children in the City is integral to the perception and reality of a healthy city; and,

   Whereas the City's neighbourhoods are comprised of a very diverse socio-economic and ethno-cultural population, and each of these groupings in our society has its own traditional practices of childrearing and expectations for family life; and,

   Whereas not all parents are able to provide fully for their children; and,

   Whereas the children who do live in the City have a greater degree of special and immediate "needs" than is found in the Metropolitan Toronto child population; and,

   Whereas children require "growing room", and they perceive the potential and function of urban space differently from adults; and,

   Whereas families go through successive stages of development requiring varied forms of supportive assistance for the healthy development of children, therefore, be it resolved that:

   City Council direct its staff to give specific attention and priority to the current conditions and projected needs of all families with children in the City in recognition that improvement and maintenance of the City of Toronto as a "City for Children" is essential to the social fabric of this municipality; and,

   That such attention and priority be manifest in the establishment of a City of Toronto Children's Network."

2. That two representatives of City Council be selected and appointed to Co-Chair the City of Toronto Children's Network; and that the Mayor be appointed as an Ex-Officio member of the Network.

3. That City Council request the City Clerk to forward this report to the:

   a) Canadian Union of Public Employees (Locals 43 and 79);

   b) City Non-Profit Housing Corporation Board of Directors;

   c) City of Toronto Local Board of Health;

d) Metropolitan Toronto Police Board of Commissioners;

e) Metropolitan Separate School Board (attn: Toronto Region);

f) Toronto Board of Education;

g) Toronto Public Library Board; and,

h) Toronto Transit Commission,

for consideration and comments, and requesting adoption of the resolution contained in Recommendation No. 1, above.

4. That City Council request the City Clerk to request:

- the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation,
- the Commissioner of Planning and Development,
- the Executive Director of Management Services,
- the Medical Officer of Health,
- the Metropolitan Separate School Board (Toronto Region),
- the Toronto Board of Education, and
- the Toronto Public Library Board

to appoint a representative to the Steering Committee of the City of Toronto Children's Network.

5. That the City Clerk be requested to advertise for nominations to the Network's Community Advocate positions:

a) for families with children aged 0-5 years focussing on the development of integrated, multiservice Family Centres;

b) for families with children aged 5-12 years focussing on the development of an effective child safety and security programme in the City; and,

c) for families with children aged 12-20 years focussing on the development of a volunteer certification programme and an affirmative action programme for the City's disadvantaged and unemployed youth.

6. That City Council request the following and any other interested organizations to consider and comment on the proposal to establish a Multicultural Family Advisory Board (see Section VII, Subsection 3) or other means of ensuring

that the City of Toronto Children's Network is sensitive to the diverse ethnocultural population of families with children in the City:

a) Children's Aide Society of Metropolitan Toronto Task Force on Multicultural Services;

b) Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations; and,

c) Toronto Board of Education Heritage Language Advisory Committee.

7. That, upon receiving notification of the Steering Committee representatives (as set out in Recommendation No. 4 above), the Co-Chairmen of the City of Toronto Children's Network convene such meetings of the Network as are necessary to:

a) select the Community Advocate members of the Network; and, following the ratification of the appointment of these members by City Council,

b) strike the Network's three Project Committees (see Section VII, Subsection 2);

c) identify staff and other resources (including the possibility of honorariums to the Community Advocate members of the Network) essential to the functioning of the Network and its Project Committees;

d) formulate a proposed work plan which incorporates the work plans of the three Project Committees as well as an evaluation process;

and set this in report form to City Council including a concise statement of the Network's terms of reference, mandate and structure.

8. That, during the initial start-up period of the Network (i.e., the work proposed in Recommendations Nos. 6 and 7 above), the Commissioner of Planning and Development be requested to provide staff assistance as necessary.

9. That, prior to adoption of Recommendations 1-8, the City Clerk circulate this report to all persons on the mailing list of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services including all agencies and departments cited in the Recommendations above, as well as any other interested parties, advising that deputations will be heard by the Neighbourhoods Committee on the report and its recommendations at a specific time, and that all members of City Council receive a copy of the report and notice of deputation time in advance of the meeting.

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I INTRODUCTION:

The popular perception of Toronto is as a "City of Neighbourhoods": tree-lined streets, children playing, lawns being cut, corner stores, local churches, schools and parks. During the past decade, City Council has developed numerous policies and implemented programmes to cultivate this neighbourhood-oriented character in such areas as: housing, parks and recreation, decentralization of City services, and revitalization of local shopping districts.

Important gains and successes have been achieved through these initiatives such that Toronto is known as "The City That Works". Yet, these improvements have been largely skeletal; they lay the backbone upon which the true goal of Toronto as a "City of Communities" can eventually be built.

A neighbourhood is a place where people live. There may or may not be a feeling of community among neighbours. Community, while it is frequently used as a synonym for neighbourhood, has a connotation of common interest. Thus, a neighbourhood which is also a community is: an area where people live in which the population is unified by common interests. There are other types of communities: religious, social, economic, political, cultural and ethnic.

A complete understanding of what community means in complex contemporary urban society eludes even the most dedicated social planners, related professionals and academics. What is widely known is that modern families can only function well within a community. At the present time, many of Toronto's neighbourhoods are real communities within which families with children thrive and develop healthfully. However, many of the City's neighbourhoods contain people who feel isolated with little or no sense of community-belonging. This report provides proposals for moving the City of Toronto along the pathway towards a "City of Communities" by concentrating on a preliminary goal: improving Toronto as a city for families with children. It is hoped that by developing communities in Toronto's neighbourhoods which benefit families, a first step towards communities for all will be made.

II BACKGROUND:

Integral to the neighbourhood concept is the presence of children, yet the number of children and youth in the City has declined far more rapidly in recent years than the decline in total City population. In 1971, there were 203,560 children aged 0-19 years in the City; in 1976, there were 169,075; and, in 1981, there were 139,715. This represents a decline of child population of 31.36 per cent from 1971-81, and 17.37 per cent from 1976-81. (Contrast this with the overall decline in City population of 15.93 per cent from 1971-81 and 5.38 per cent from 1976-81.) Two factors contributing to the decline are:

a) adults opting to have fewer children; and

b) families moving to suburban areas.

As the number of children living in the City declines, the services and facilities which attract and hold families also decline. Thus, a downward spiral is created: a neighbourhood (City) which does not accommodate families with children will not attract new families.

The end result is apartment buildings, streets and neighbourhoods which house primarily people without children. In this milieu, families with children struggle to find the necessary sources of supports, information, and community services which are critical for child-rearing in contemporary society.

Hence, the conclusion of one knowledgeable observer that "all social indicators suggest that Toronto families and their children have needs over and above the norms."(*2) Numerous indicators are available to support such a conclusion. For example:

a) In 1981, 14,068 children in the City between the ages of 0 and 16 were living in families which rely on general welfare or family benefits for income. This represents approximately 13 per cent of the City's child population (0-16). The total number of such children in Metro in 1981 was 33,400; therefore, 42 per cent of Metro's neediest children live in the City of Toronto.

b) Nearly half the reported child abuse cases in Metro in 1981 occurred in the City of Toronto while the City had only 23.6 per cent of Metro's children.

c) Approximately 50 per cent of the children entering our public school system do not speak English as their first language.

d) The number of single parents with children and youth (under the age of 24) living at home increased by 7 per cent from 1976 to 1981, while the overall decline of children/youth at home during the same time period was 27 per cent. As of 1981, the total number of such lone parent families was 20,285 and the total number of children in single parent families was 27,495.

On November 17, 1980, the City of Toronto Planning Board mandated a Committee on Children's Services to:

a) compile, review and assess relevant information;

b) liaise and consult with the community and service providers; and,

c) recommend policies and proposals for action which could be forwarded to City Council.

The Planning Board Committee on Children's Services (PBCCS) engaged in two years of practical and theoretical research, discussions and writing by the Chairman, members and staff. In addition, several rounds of consultation were held with parents, local service providers, social planners, and senior personnel in major agencies and local-level government departments. (Appendix "A" contains a very short summary of the work of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services.)

The last report of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, entitled Final Recommendations on Proposals to Improve Services for Families with Children in the City of Toronto, was presented to the City of Toronto Planning Board on December 6, 1982.

In this report, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services condensed the proposals contained in its earlier document, An Evaluation of Children's Services. The Final Recommendations report proposed the establishment of a three-pronged mechanism to review and re-orient the services presently provided by local-level government for families with children:

a) A Children's Council: A public body (comprised of parents, neighbourhood-oriented direct service workers, child advocates and possibly children) to ensure community involvement in the review, design, co-ordination and implementation of services for families with children.

b) A Children's Services Team: A team of representatives from those local-level government departments and agencies which

provide/fund services for families with children. The Team's function is to respond to community proposals and ideas and to co-ordinate internal agency initiatives.

c) A Children's Services Co-ordinator: A high-profile advocate for families with children, funded and mandated by City Council to assist the Children's Council and to convene and chair meetings of the Team.

In December, 1982, the Planning Board expressed "support in principle" for these three recommendations and forwarded the report to Neighbourhoods Committee of City Council.

When Neighbourhoods Committee received this report on January 27, 1983, the comments made by members of that Committee were very similar to those made by the overwhelming majority of those consulted by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services.

In short, there was general agreement that the problems and issues identified by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services were serious and something should be done. However, people found the volume of material prepared and presented by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services overwhelming.

Those consulted felt that the proposed three-pronged mechanism would be useful, but:

a) as formulated, it lacked the philosophical content which would indicate to everyone what kind of reorientation is required; and,

b) to set up such a mechanism without a comprehensive conceptual framework could result in a bureaucratic/community tangle in which nothing of substance would be achieved.

This report represents a response to these reactions. In preparing it, I have reviewed the entire work of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services. (Copies of all the Committee's reports have been filed with the City Clerk.) I have sought, in particular, to elabourate the raison-d'etre for the policies and programmes proposed by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services.

The proposals developed by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services are unique and worthwhile in several respects:

a) It is the first time an existing public advisory body connected with the City has been mandated to study and recommend on this type of problem; the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services therefore is a one-of-its-kind experiment.

b) The proposals focus as much on the structure of the review and reorientation process as on its content. (This was the subject of much criticism, but it is also an essential merit in the Committee's work due to the complexity of bureaucratic relationships.)

c) In view of the proposed initial restriction to local-level government services, the proposals are aimed at publicly-accountable bodies which already focus a considerable amount of resource and priority on the target population group.

d) As far as is known, no other City in North America has made this kind of visible and tangible commitment to resolving these issues. It appears to be a totally new approach which may be in keeping with the City of Toronto's international reputation for being highly responsive to its own urban social change conditions.

Nevertheless, the concern expressed by many people about bureaucratic entanglement is reasonable. Also valid is the concern that not enough of the desired philosophical content is reflected in the final three-pronged recommendations to achieve successful and beneficial reorientation of services.

In the following sections of this report, I will address these shortcomings by extracting concepts from material prepared by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services and expanding on it to produce:

a) a conceptual framework for contemporary children's services; and

b) an alternative implementation process.

The conceptual framework is presented in summary form in the opening portion of Section V, from which point the discussion leads towards responsibilities, priorities, proposals for action and implementation.

Sections III and IV, immediately following this one and printed on coloured paper, are comprised largely of a theoretical discussion of the factors which contribute to developmental risk in contemporary urban-dwelling children. These sections include a review of some of the relevant literature and should be treated as background to the more practical, result-oriented sections which follow at the end of this report. Section V begins with a summary of the principles extracted from this theoretical discussion.

III FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN CONTEMPORARY URBAN SOCIETY

"The needs of young children are inextricably bound up in their families. When families are doing well, young children thrive. When families are threatened, we do well to worry over the quality of life for young children."(*3)

Children are born dependent on adults for everything: food, shelter, clothing, preventive health care, treatment of illness/handicaps, psychological well-being, recreation, education, safety and protection, and moral development.

The changing nature of the nuclear family (increase in single parents and number of married women in the workforce), and the effects on the family of modern urban life (decline in the presence of the extended family, inflation, unemployment, cultural and race tensions, isolation from other families with children), combine together to create difficult and stressful conditions for child-rearing. Parents are no longer in control of the totality of their children's lives. Traditional social supports to the family have been eroded or dismantled and many parents do not have the resources to construct the necessary new forms of support.

The quote which introduces this report poses the paradoxical question with which the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services grappled for two years. How can society respond supportively to the "emerging needs" of the family which are subject to the "everchanging demands" of a highly complex society? How may society counteract the separation of children's and adults' roles, and the fragmentation of the worlds in which children live and develop?

The answers the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services eventually developed to this question are:

a) The primary goal of evaluating and improving services should be to alleviate the stresses (i.e., "everchanging demands") which put children and/or families "at risk". This is the job the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services had assigned to the three-pronged mechanism of council, team and co-ordinator.

b) Through the involvement of parents, direct service workers and possibly youth in the council, "emerging needs" could be assessed and addressed.

c) Through the co-ordination of programmes and services aimed at target populations of families with children, stronger bridges between the fragmented worlds of children's lives and adults' responsibilities can be formed. This would enhance the quality of family life and increase potential for healthful development.

There is an emerging body of theory developed by Bronfenbrenner, Garbarino, Andrews and others which provides useful guides to analyzing the aspects of society which create stress on the family.

Entitled the "Ecology of Risk" by Andrews (*4), it identifies four distinct but overlapping realms of influence on the developing child. (See Diagram #1 for a graphical interpretation of this complex theory.) In brief, these realms are:

1st) The nature of the parent/child relationship and any existing 'proxy-parent'*/child relationships. This realm consists of situations of direct, face-to-face contact between the child and others (especially adults).

2nd) The network of relationships between parents, 'proxy-parents', and other adults in regular, direct contact with the child, including the quality and depth of that network and the divergence or congruence of values communicated to the child through the activities occurring in these different settings. This realm thus comprises the network of situations or settings in which the developing child interacts with others.

3rd) The social and political forces directly on the child or the child's family, for example: hours of work of parent, non-work interests of teachers, activities of siblings in which the child is not involved, and policy/programme implementation which determines the child's or the family's accessibility to local services. The forces influencing the family in this realm are frequently outside of the immediate control of family members.

4th) The social, political and cultural attitudes of society as-a-whole, which shape attitudes towards (and within) families, for example: sexism, racism, class distinction, cultural norms in religious beliefs/political views.

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*'Proxy-parent' is used here to mean any adult in the child's immediate environment who has formed a close, enduring and reciprocal relationship with the child in addition to any other supervisory or educational dimensions of their relationship. It could be a teacher, day care worker, recreation leader, other family relative or even older children.

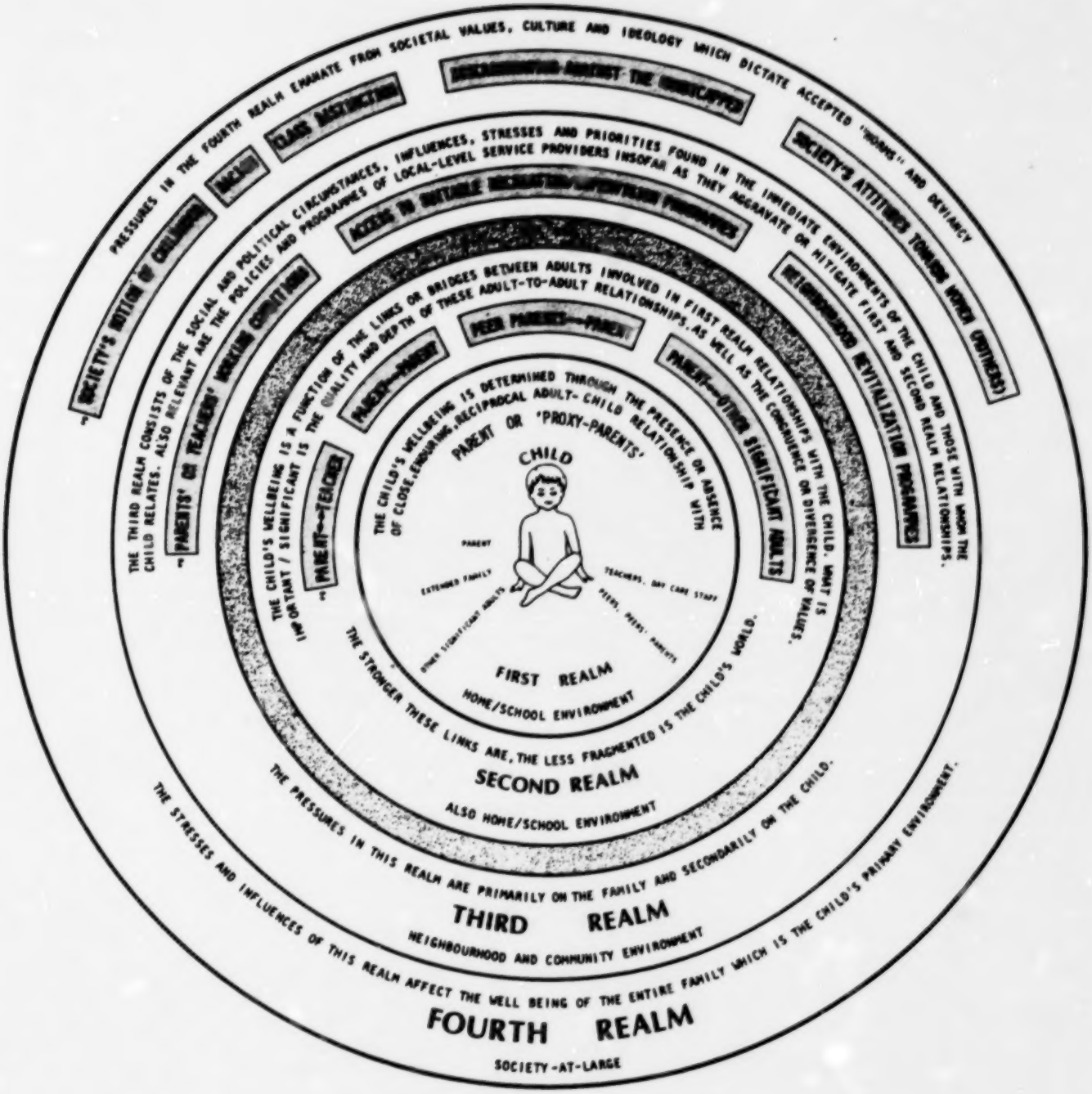
PRESSURES IN THE FOURTH REALM EMANATE FROM SOCIETAL VALUES, CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY WHICH DICTATE ACCEPTED "NORMS" AND DEVIANCY
SOCIETY'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN (SEXISM)
RACISM
CLASS DISCRIMINATION
SOCIETY'S NOTION OF CHILDHOOD
"PARENTS" OR TEACHERS' WORKING CONDITIONS
ACCESS TO SUITABLE RECREATION/SUPERVISED PROGRAMMES
NEIGHBOURHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAMMES
THE THIRD REALM CONSISTS OF THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES, INFLUENCES, STRESSES AND PRIORITIES FOUND IN THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTS OF THE CHILD AND THOSE WITH WHOM THE CHILD RELATES. ALSO RELEVANT ARE THE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES OF LOCAL-LEVEL SERVICE PROVIDERS INSOFAR AS THEY AGGRAVATE OR MITIGATE FIRST AND SECOND REALM RELATIONSHIPS.
PEER PARENTS—PARENTS
PARENT—PARENT
PARENT—TEACHER
PARENT—OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADULTS
THE CHILD'S WELLBEING IS A FUNCTION OF THE LINKS OR BRIDGES BETWEEN ADULTS INVOLVED IN FIRST REALM RELATIONSHIPS, AS WELL AS THE CONGRUENCE OR DIVERGENCE OF VALUES.
IMPORTANT / SIGNIFICANT IS THE QUALITY AND DEPTH OF THESE ADULT-TO-ADULT RELATIONSHIPS.
THE CHILD'S WELLBEING IS DETERMINED THROUGH THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF CLOSE, ENDURING, RECIPROCAL ADULT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENT OR 'PROXY-PARENTS'
CHILD
PARENT
EXTENDED FAMILY
OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADULTS
TEACHERS, DAY CARE STAFF
PEERS, PEERS' PARENTS
FIRST REALM
HOME/SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
THE STRONGER THESE LINKS ARE, THE LESS FRAGMENTED IS THE CHILD'S WORLD.
SECOND REALM
ALSO HOME/SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
THE PRESSURES IN THIS REALM ARE PRIMARILY ON THE FAMILY AND SECONDARILY ON THE CHILD.
THIRD REALM
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
THE STRESSES AND INFLUENCES OF THIS REALM AFFECT THE WELL BEING OF THE ENTIRE FAMILY WHICH IS THE CHILD'S PRIMARY ENVIRONMENT.
FOURTH REALM
SOCIETY-AT-LARGE

DIAGRAM No. 1

THE ECOLOGY OF RISK

HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS WHICH INFLUENCE CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

THE 'ECOLOGY OF RISK': A Concrete Situation

PROBLEM: THE CHILD IS MISBEHAVING IN SCHOOL. ALTHOUGH NEVER PARTICULARLY ATTENTIVE OR DILIGENT, THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR HAS BECOME MUCH WORSE IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS. THE TEACHER IS DICIPLINING THE CHILD TO NO EFFECT.

HISTORY: AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BLACK CHILD IS LIVING IN A HOME WHICH HAS JUST GONE THROUGH PARENTAL SEPARATION. THE BOY HAD A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH PARENT. THE FATHER IS NOW TOTALLY OUT OF THE PICTURE AND THE BOY AND HIS SISTERS ARE LIVING WITH THE MOTHER. ALL CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL FULLTIME. THE MOTHER HAS FULLTIME, POORLY-PAID EMPLOYMENT AND IS GONE FROM THE HOME FROM 7:30A.M. TO 6:00P.M. SHE CANNOT AFFORD BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CHILDCARE SERVICES.

	STRESS + EFFECTS	SHORT-TERM, PRACTICAL 'INTERVENTIONS' WHICH PROTECT CHILD and/or SUPPORT FAMILY
1st Realm:	FATHER IS ABSENT; child misses father TEACHER DOES NOT CONNECT WITH CHILD AND CHILD'S NEEDS; child knows that the "misbehaviour" is not his "fault" and feels isolated and frustrated. MOTHER IS TENSE AND TIRED ALL THE TIME; causes tension in child/mother relationship.	1. Family programmes in local neighbourhoods which offer: - parent support and parent relief; - parenting education information and skills; - connections to other parents, families, children and social services; and - "big-brother" type supports. 2. Hiring and employment policies which encourage staff working directly with children to acknowledge their "proxy-parent" role and develop close, enduring and reciprocal relationships.
2nd Realm:	POOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MOTHER AND TEACHER (due to a variety of causes); teacher disciplines child and questions mother's adequacy without understanding the home situation.	3. A truly "open-door" policy at the school which would bridge any ethno-cultural/socio-economic gaps and and compensate for pressures in other Realms so that effective teacher/parent dialogue takes place. (This would include home visits by teachers and relate to #2 above.)
3rd Realm:	LOW INCOME-LEVEL OF FAMILY AND ABSENCE OF ACCESSIBLE, SUITABLE PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN LOCAL AREA; children have inadequate supervision, social recreation and nutrition. HOURS OF WORK AND DEMANDS OF OTHER CHILDREN MAKE MOTHER INACCESSIBLE (to teacher and special needs of boy); aggravates weak links in 2nd Realm and original problems in 1st Realm.	4. Multi-age, high-quality social recreation programmes in the local area which incorporate supervision and nutrition supplements, and are accessible/suitable for the diversity of the child population in the local neighbourhood. (Those supports to the mother which are practical and immediate are discussed above and below.)
4th Realm:	RACIST ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE INSTABILITY OF THE BLACK FAMILY ARE REINFORCED; lowers self-esteem of child, siblings, mother and aggravates 2nd Realm problems.	5. Support groups specifically for Black single-parent families which incorporate the items mentioned in #1 above. 6. Public service hiring policies and retraining programmes, as well as community programmes, aimed at combatting racism by promoting greater intercultural/ethnic understanding and awareness.

DIAGRAM No.2

How does this apply to urban children? How do these four realms of influence on the child affect his/her vulnerability or invulnerability to developmental risk?

Using the four realms as outlined above and shown on Diagram #1, Diagram #2 seeks to apply this theory to a concrete situation.

What can be seen from Diagram #2 is that many stresses, pressures and influences affect the child in a particular situation. The apparent 'problem' in this illustration is 'misbehaviour' at school. But, as can be seen through this example, the real 'problem' is multifaceted and is a result of inter-personal, social, cultural and political dynamics in all realms of the child's life. This theoretical approach can be usefully and concretely applied to almost any 'problem' children face in contemporary society. It provides the framework for analysing the very complexity of society which contributes to the development of these problems.

"How do we respond? How can we protect families (and thus enhance the lives of children)? ... To protect families, we must lose ourselves in the social landscape, blend in with the human terrain, become part of the natural ecology of family life."(*5)

As Andrews (op.cit.) has indicated, there are pivotal points of "risk" to the child in this set of ecological relationships:

a) In the first realm, "without close, enduring and reciprocal relationships" between adult and child, "healthful development is threatened".

b) In the second realm, "without strong, multifaceted and overlapping connections ... the ecological risks to the child are compounded". In the worst possible situation, the child may serve as the only link between the different settings in which he/she lives creating "a splintered world of discrete and isolated settings in which the child is left to his own devices to reconcile different activities and values manifested in each, and lacking any effective mechanisms for providing feedback and reinforcement amongst the array of experiences separately encountered".

c) Deprivation in both the first and second realm has "a high probability of occurring in situations where parents are socially isolated or only weakly connected to others in the local area ..."

d) In the third realm, "risk" to the child occurs through:

   i) pressures on the parents (or 'proxy-parents') which "impoverish the quality of their behaviour and interaction in settings containing the child"; and

ii) also when "decisions are taken by local political bodies, service agencies and other organizations with adverse effects for children or which treat children unequally or unfairly".

e) It is in the fourth realm that "risks to the health and welfare of children are ... the most deeply rooted and persuasive of all in the ecology of risk". At this level, "risk" is in the ideology or cultural orientation of society-at-large towards groupings within it: the handicapped, ethnic minorities, women, parents, children, families, etc.

Andrews goes on to conclude that, once one comprehends the ecological nature of risk, "a frequent reaction ... is to the effect that most programmes amount to short-term, band-aid solutions, when what is really required is massive social overhaul and reconstruction". But, "without in anyway attempting to deny (these) compelling arguments ... it is nevertheless the case that significant results are achievable and may be demonstrated from interventions ... aimed at the events of the most immediately experienced levels of the ecological environment".

Concrete examples of the types of short-term interventions which are useful and appropriate are shown in Diagram #2. I will return to a fuller discussion of this after we view the City from the child's perspective.

IV HOW CONTEMPORARY URBAN ENVIRONMENTS AFFECT CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Childhood is a transitional state; the task of the adult is to successfully guide the child through the intrinsic transitional developmental stages to fully-functioning adulthood. In the previous section, the human relationships affecting the child have been examined. It has been shown that the alienation and isolating character of contemporary urban society creates particular pressures in this developmental process.

This section will examine two further factors affecting the potential of children to develop to optimal level:

- the characteristics of urban space as they affect the child; and,

- the changing needs of children (as they grow) in relation to the urban environment.

Much of normal, healthy child development is self-propelled. The infant is born hungry; food produces growth; growth (experience and increased muscular co-ordination) produces movement; movement permits exploration, etc. Thus, it can be said that all children require "growing room" (*6) in which to play, to make and maintain social contacts, and to develop skills which will be useful in adulthood. In relation to the home environment:

"If the living space of the child is very small and confined, his impulse to move about and do things is constantly being choked ... Observations show that restrictive conditions in the environment can indeed cause a grave lack of experience and confidence in dealing with spatial and social surroundings ...

The growing motorical impulse of the small child almost automatically leads to collisions with the social system of rules made by adults ... And such conflicts are usually decided in favour of the 'powerful' adults ...

The more minimal the possibility for family members to separate from one another, the higher the proportion of involuntary enforced interactions. Where children and parents are always in one another's way, the conflict can turn into a permanent state ...

The situation is undoubtedly especially unfavourable for children in dense, central-town living areas where children from over-

occupied buildings hardly have the alternative at their disposal of safe outdoor space to play in ..."(*6)

As children grow they become more mobile and space outside the home becomes more significant as "growing room". Although the quote is lengthy, I have extracted key phrases from an article by Kevin Lynch to illustrate how children perceive and use the urban landscape:

"... if I am interested in making a better world, than necessarily, I must begin with an understanding of what environment means ... For these reasons I have always been particularly interested in the children in a given environment ... I began to explore the subject through retrospection when teaching graduate students in City planning ... some of the same elements were always mentioned. One was ground surface. Again and again, we heard memories of the grass, the sidewalks, the asphalt pavements, the sand or the rock, the surface of the ground over which the children had played ... Another topic was space ... they remembered huge cavernous places such as airplane hangers or train stations, or open spaces ... where they felt they could run or where they had a feeling of tremendous freedom. They spoke, too, of hidden spaces ... places they could get into and feel safe and close ... Almost all participants said something about trees ... Animals, too, were prominent ... hills, oceans, streams ... We learned about the streets and sidewalks ... the halls and corridors ... the doorways ... Attention in memory seemed to linger less on the formal places where children were supposed to be, and more on ... what I would call the 'wastelands' ... There was talk about a back alley, the roof of a garage, a vacant lot, the woods, the river valley, the sewers ... all places which were not intended for them ... There was ... a sharp awareness of visible activity: seeing people doing things, remembering milk deliveries, construction, factories ... The environment was remembered as something they could use in an active way (the environment as a setting for action) ... we heard the idea of territory or control ... places that shut children in or shut them out ... the pervasiveness of adult control ... how significant are those places which are children's territory ... The sense of journeying often came up ... The environment was also seen as a social symbol ... They knew just where class changed on a street; they knew the racial divisions; they knew where it was safe to go and where it was not. They had found that society was mapped out on the ground ..."(*7)

Clearly, from the child's perspective, the most valued aspects of the urban environment include: its potential for stimulation (learning, growth) through observation and activity; its spaciousness and the aspects of physical beauty found within it; the people in the environment; and, the autonomy or privacy afforded the child in parts of the environment.

A study of 7,000 Grade Nine students in Metropolitan Toronto supports these conclusions.(*8) In response to three open-ended questions, these young people stated:

1. What they like most in their neighbourhoods:

   - that it is quiet, calm, peaceful;
   - the friendliness, access to friends and the people (a feeling of community?);
   - the accessibility to public open space;
   - accessibility to shopping facilities; and
   - things to do, activities, excitement.

2. What they dislike most in their neighbourhood:

   - the lack of things to do, boring, dull;
   - individual neighbours, gang/bullies/toughs, not enough teenagers/friends, unfriendliness (lack of community feeling?);
   - noise and traffic; and
   - lack of personal privacy.

3. What they feel is missing in their neighbourhood:

   - community recreation, sports facilities, centres, etc. (especially swimming pools);
   - more teenagers, girls, boys, friends, friendliness, more friendly people;
   - public open space; and
   - things to do, activities, excitement.

All children in "dense, central-town living areas", such as are found in many parts of the City of Toronto, can be considered potentially at risk. The physical environment is a relatively permanent and fixed factor, creating conditions of risk. The variable factors, such as the quality of adult relationships in the child's life, the physical health of the child, and accessibility to facilities and programmes, determine how such damage is done to the child's development and further developmental potential as a result of these hazardous conditions.

As Lynch states in a separate source:

"The City should open out to these children. They want both quiet and stimulus and should find both close at hand. The relation of residential areas and City services is not only important for adult welfare but for the child's welfare as well. It may be more critical for the latter, since the child is more limited in his range and has the greater hunger for stimulus because his growth feeds on it." (*9)

Children see themselves, correctly, as powerless in almost all relationships with the adult world. The dependence of children is a function of their small size, weakness and inexperience.

Concerned adult intermediaries are required if the child is to make use of the resources available in contemporary urban environments. The degree of adult mediation required by the child to negotiate his/her way around the urban environment, decreases as the child matures.

To further examine this subject, it is most productive to divide the child/youth population into three separate groups:

1. the very young (0-5 years) who must rely on adult ministrations and support to make any significant use of the resources available in the urban environment;

2. the young school-aged child (5-12 years approximately) who has a limited range of access to resources; and,

3. the teenager or young adult (12-20 years approximately) who (hopefully) progresses steadily through these years from a "regional" range of access to resources to a totally independent and mature use of the City's environment.

The Planning Board Committee on Children's Services concluded that highest priority should be given to directing resources to improve services for families with very young children. This conclusion is supported by the "Ecology of Risk" discussion presented in the previous section of this report.

It is in the family with young children that the dimensions and demands of parenthood are just being explored. Modern urban stresses such as unemployment, decline of the extended family, rise in single-parenting, cultural and race tensions, and isolation from other families have their most profound and negative impacts on young families.

During the early years (post-natal and preschool), the urban child does most of his/her learning and developing in the home and whatever private leisure-time space is accessible to the family. The child of this age does not make any real use of facilities on an independent basis. Adults who endeavour to expose children at

this age to services and programmes outside the home encounter a number of logistical difficulties, such as:

- poor access for strollers and baby carriages;
- services not available in local area;
- juggling naptimes, school hours of older siblings, and other routines.

Therefore, in very early childhood, the potential and effect of the urban environment has an impact on the children through the obstacles or ease-of-access presented to adults who accompany children.

Young school-aged children can move around in the local area, but usually must advise parents of where they will be and expected time of return. Children of this age are given a double-sided message. On the one hand: don't get lost or in trouble and if you do, ask a responsible adult for assistance; on the other hand: stay away from strange adults, they may harm you. The child at this age is not mature enough to determine the distinction between a responsible and a strange adult.

Programmes developed to institute a higher level of child security, such as Block Parents, have not been particularly successful in concentrated urban areas. It may be the case that the design of these programmes is not adequate for neighbourhoods where the social fabric is thin.

Furthermore, if such facilities as parkettes, recreation programmes and libraries are not within the area designated to the child by the parent as accessible, children cannot take advantage of these opportunities on their own. Recent studies (*10) have shown that the neighbourhoods which are park deficient are the same areas which have a preponderance of socio-economic conditions indicating a high potential for developmental risk to the child. A further threat to accessibility to services for families with young children is through declining enrollment. Often the neighbourhood elementary school functions as a family community centre. As enrollment drops, costs rise and budgets are cut, the local school is increasingly pressed to closure.

As children mature in age and experience, they become more mobile, taking increasing advantage of regional services and facilities. In addition, peer relationships often became as significant as, or more significant than, family relationships.

This opens up new opportunities for youth, but also exposes them to new hazards: adult films, arcades, taverns, massage parlours, etc. One alternative to these places which is readily accessible and offers youth a relatively high level of autonomy is 24-hour

establishments such as doughnut shops, variety stores, etc. These places frequently function as centres of prostitution and drug activity. The only other alternatives are highly public places such as sidewalks, schoolyards and parkettes; when youth congregate in these locations, adults frequently complain about noise and what they perceive as other unacceptable behaviour. In short, contemporary urban society offers little to youth which is appropriate to this age level: organized, productive, volunteer programmes are minimal; jobs are extremely scarce; and, leisure programmes often do not attract them.

"Thus, the fact that children develop is to be understood not only to differentiate accurately the situation of children from adults, but to suggest how children of various ages differ from one another and what this means for urban environment ... Our concern for children must go beyond a few customary forms of land use and extend through a wide variety of details and levels of scale."(*11)

V CONCEPTS INTO ACTION: THE ONUS IS ON LOCAL-LEVEL GOVERNMENT

There is no dispute that as tomorrow's citizens, today's children are society's greatest resource. The normal, healthy development of child to fully-functioning adult is self-propelled. However, this development occurs within a physical and social environment which provides constraints and barriers inhibiting normal development, as well as opportunities which may promote or enhance it.

In contemporary urban society, the physical aspect of the child's environment is riddled with hazards which hinder this normal developmental process. In many, many instances, particularly in diverse, dense, downtown areas such as are found in the City of Toronto, the social condition of the child's environment also presents serious impediments to normal, healthy development.

The following ten principles constitute the basis of the conceptual framework within which any review and reorientation of services for families with children should take place. This philosophical approach to the design, implementation and review of services for families with children has been translated into concrete terms in Diagram #2 for illustrative purposes.

It is widely accepted that:

1. The vibrant presence of families with children in the City is integral to the perception and reality of a healthy City. The child population of the City is declining rapidly; so, for the well being of the City, it is vitally important to improve Toronto as a city for families with children.

2. The city's neighbourhoods are comprised of a very diverse socio-economic and ethno-cultural population; each of these groupings in our society has its own traditional practices of childrearing and expectations for family life. To ensure healthful development of all children, service providers must understand the diverse heritages of the City's child population and endeavour to strengthen each child's notion of what s/he is.

To do the above, we must view the City through the eyes of all members of the family. We must recognize that:

3. Despite the prevailing notion that children are the responsibility of their parents, parents are not in control of

the totality of their children's lives, having ceded authority to educational, health, recreation, judicial and other institutions. In addition, due to a variety of causes, not all parents are able to provide fully for their children even with the support of these institutions.

4. The children who do live in the City have a greater degree of special and immediate "needs" than is found in the Metropolitan Toronto child population.

5. Children require "growing room", and they perceive the potential, function and effect of urban space differently from adults. It is through play and practise (which both require "growing room") that children learn life skills and develop the ability to maintain independent relationships.

6. Families go through successive stages of development requiring varied forms of supportive assistance for the healthy development of children.

7. In relation to services, children value: physical freedom; protection from hazards; autonomy (in a safe environment); interesting environments which can be molded, shaped or used creatively; accessibility; diversity; stimulation; quiet; opportunities for skill-development; and, opportunities for development of self-esteem.

In the earlier portions of this report, we have learned that "the City should open out to these children"; in other words:

8. Support the parent/child relationship.

9. Reinforce the child's primary social environment by actively encouraging and supporting:

   i) 'proxy-parent'/child relationships; and

   ii) connections between parents, 'proxy-parents' and direct-service staff in children's services.

10. Develop and implement services for families with children which aim to:

    i) promote connections between families in their local neighbourhoods;

    ii) overcome alienation, isolation and cultural/race tensions; and

    iii) supplement the child's satisfaction of basic needs (i.e., supervision, nutrition, skill development).

Every time a child is born, there is a new opportunity for society to demonstrate its willingness to respond supportively to the emerging needs of the family, based on the ever-changing demands of a highly complex society. Traditionally, one of the most responsive institutions in our society is municipal government. Although some of the interventions outlined in Diagram #2 are not within the mandate of local-level government, a surprising number of them are or could be.

In relation to service delivery, local-level government's mandate is largely in the area of primary prevention (i.e., immunization, recreation programmes, education, free access to books, etc.). There is a more limited but recognized role in other levels of prevention and crisis intervention (i.e., grants to neighbourhood support services, mental health nursing, "behavioural" classes in schools, recreation services for the handicapped, subsidized housing).

In recent years, due to the deterioration of socio-economic conditions in society and the greater responsiveness of locally-elected politicians in the school systems and at City Hall, this second role in service delivery has grown larger and larger.

A variety of initiatives have been launched in recent years including:

a) the Five Year Equalization Plan by the Toronto Public Library Board;

b) the recent decentralization of the Public Health Department and the recommendations in Public Health in the 1980's giving priority to work around the child-bearing cycle;

c) the Comprehensive Care and other policies of the Toronto Board of Education;

d) in the Metropolitan Separate School Board, the routine visitation of all Junior Kindergarten children by the teacher at his/her home;

e) the designation of "special needs" or "inner city" on many City schools by the two school systems resulting in increased funds for these schools;

f) the Neighbourhood Task Force on Community and Social and Recreational Services to which the Parks and Recreation Department served as primary staff resource, which has implemented some significant, beneficial changes to the funding and delivery of local social and recreational services;

g) housing policies and programmes of City Council as developed and implemented by Cityhome, the City Housing Department, and the Planning and Development Department; and

h) the formation of the Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations, the Task Force on Work Place Day Care, and the Planning Board's Committee on Children's Services.

These efforts indicate that responsible bodies have begun to address "emerging needs" within "everchanging conditions" to support families with children.

Why is this not sufficient?

To date, there is no formal recognition of the imperative necessity for these local public service agencies to extend their collective responsibility to ensure effective co-ordination between themselves, thereby maximizing results and resources. This is especially urgent in the current fiscal-restraint climate.

Secondly, among relevant agencies, there are varied levels of acceptance of, and action on, the fundamental principles of service orientation which the conceptual framework of this paper prescribes (detailed in previous sections and summed up at the beginning of this section).

Thirdly, recognition of the value of involving families, 'proxy-parents' and child advocates in the review, design and implementation of services in order to: a) accurately assess "emerging needs"; and, b) ensure that these issues are addressed by responsible agencies; is at varied stages of development.

Finally, City Council has not yet formally stated that, for the well-being of the City, as well as children in the City, it is essential to do these things.

This last point, the specific declaration of Toronto as a "City for Children", not just a City of Neighbourhoods, with all that this entails in terms of review and reorientation of services, programmes, facilities and policies, is the ultimate goal of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services with which I concur. In the following section, I will, however, propose a specific set of initiatives with which to begin, and an implementation process which differs from that identified by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services.

VI PRIORITIES: PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

"A major reason for inadequacies in public programmes for children is the abiding belief that primary responsibility rests, or should rest, upon parents, with resultant distrust of and resistance to expanded governmental activities in family life. The fact is that today, as in the past, many families ... cannot bear this burden of responsibility unaided ...

Can we base policies for all children on prudential considerations rather than on affection mingled with indifference? The great child-helpers of the past ... may have liked children, but that was not the mainspring of their work. They cared about children because they cared about civilization, progress, justice and order ... They knew that neglect of either the physical or social welfare of children was fraught with danger not only to the children, but to the City itself."(*12)

During its two years of work, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, and those consulted by the Committee, identified a number of areas of particular concern. These include:

- improved sex education and birth control information and services;
- routine rubella immunization for girls;
- comprehensive prenatal care and nutrition programmes;
- pre-parenting education programmes;
- accessible childbirth preparation classes;
- family-centered childbirth options;
- comprehensive postnatal programmes for the new parent;
- comprehensive well-baby care;
- accessible parent support, relief and education programmes;
- improved outreach for early disability screening and universal immunization;
- accessible preschool stimulation programmes;

- comprehensive day care programmes and improved subsidies;

- nutrition supplement programmes for young school-aged children;

- comprehensive community-based, police-supported urban safety and security programme for school-aged children;

- accessible family and child leisure-time programming which is:

    - low-cost or free;

    - sensitive to the diverse ethno-cultural heritages of families with children in the City; and

    - appeals to the variety of age groups found in a family;

- innovative design of recreation space and housing units to accommodate the "growing room" requirements of the child as well as the need children have for non-obtrusive supervision;

- accessible leisure-time programmes and facilities specifically designed for preteens and for teenagers; and

- quality volunteer programmes and affirmative action employment opportunities for the City's youth.

As detailed in Appendix "A", the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services reached several fundamental conclusions on which it based its belief that the reorientation of services for families with children should be of high priority to local-level government.

To briefly summarize some of these conclusions, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services was concerned about:

- the effect on the City of the dramatic decline in child population, and

- the well-being of the relatively high proportion of children in the City who are "at risk".

The Committee felt that particular regard must be paid to the development of family support programmes which compensate for:

- the changing nature of the 'family'; and,

- modern urban stresses on the family.

To begin to tackle these problems, which are discussed in great detail in the first three sections of this report, the Planning

Board Committee on Children's Services felt that the following tenets should be integral to the review process:

- focussing initially on those services funded and/or delivered by local-level governments;

- utilize an age-related approach to service delivery but recognize the need for simultaneous multi-age programming; and

- avoid a limited geographically-based pilot-project approach because of the diversity of the City's neighbourhoods;

- pay very high regard to the accessibility, promotion and outreach to/for the ethno-culturally and socio-economically diverse population of families with children in the City of Toronto.

In the proposals which follow, I have outlined four concrete actions which can begin the work recommended by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services.

In developing these proposals, I have sought to incorporate these tenets, while limiting the immediate global focus of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services. I have, therefore, identified an initiative for each major age group of families with children which I believe will make a significant contribution to their well-being. Finally, the three priority programmes identified are chosen so that no social agency will be required to make a major contribution in more than one area at this time, but so that each of the major departments/agencies is involved.

None of the initiatives set out below is new. Each is at some state of identification or implementation. What is new is the emphasis on local-level public service agency co-ordination to achieve the goal of supporting families and thereby improving the developmental opportunities available to children in the City.

A number of issues have been identified but this report recognizes the need to concentrate energy to realize objectives. It also recognizes that the pivotal point for intervention is among families with very young children, and that the highest overall programme priority is for this sector of the family population.

1. Policy

All too often, policy takes the place of the more difficult and time-consuming task of reviewing and reorienting the actual design and implementation of services. However, clearly-stated policy goals are necessary for the successful redirection of services. Therefore, this report will recommend that City Council direct its staff, and request otherlocal-level public officials to direct

their staff, to adopt a general policy statement based on the following elements:

a) that specific attention and priority be given to the current and projected conditions and needs of the City's diverse socio economic and ethnocultural population of families with children;

b) that this attention and priority be reflected through a commitment to review and reorient services for families with children;

c) that providing support to these families be the specific focus of developing and improving services;

d) that to achieve these objectives, it is essential for staff of local-level public service agencies to co-ordinate their efforts to maximize resources and results; and

e) that staff consult with, involve and actively encourage the participation of parents, direct-service workers ('proxy-parents'), child advocates and youth in this process.

2. For Families with Very Young Children

The goal of this initiative is to begin developing a comprehensive, universally accessible set of "Family Centres" in the City of Toronto. The necessity and rationale for this goal is detailed in Section III of this report and summarized in the set of principles found in Section V.

The family with children aged 0-5 is the most vulnerable age grouping as these families are most likely to be under stress; the child is most limited in terms of access to "growing room" and 'proxy-parents'; and, up to the present time, comparatively little is offered to this age group by local-level public services. The Department of Public Health has identified work in this area as one of its highest priorities in the next few years. Other local-level public service agencies have also committed themselves to work in this area including: the Toronto Public Library System and the Toronto Board of Education.

Families with very young children are not very mobile. In addition, the primary care-giving parent is often constrained by the routines and schedules of other family members. These factors, combined with the isolation experienced by many contemporary young urban families, are important in the consideration of what type of service would most adequately meet the needs of the target population.

During the extensive consultation process of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, several immediate needs were identified:

a) pre-natal nutrition and care;

b) childbirth education and exercise programmes;

c) post-natal and other support groups;

d) parent education classes;

e) parent relief programmes;

f) family activity programmes;

g) outreach to achieve early disability screening and universal immunization; and

h) preschool stimulation programmes.

This report will recommend that City Council direct its staff, and request other agencies to direct their staff, to co-ordinate efforts to meet these needs.

This initiative involves the development of general policy, resource allocation, and service-delivery guidelines to implement four or five integrated 'Family Centres' in demographically representative and and diverse neighbourhoods in the City.

These centres could be located in elementary schools with declining enrollment, or in library, church or community centre space. They would seek to provide as many as possible of the eight programme needs identified above.

This idea is not new; it has just not been adequately implemented because it requires creative energy, clear management priority, and service-delivery co-ordination. Specifically, this type of approach has recently been advocated in at least two relevant sources: the Comprehensive Care Policy of the Toronto Board of Education; and, the report of the Commission on Inquiry into Education of the Young Child, To Herald a Child, by Laurier L. Lapierre.

The City currently benefits from some very valuable grass-roots services of this nature: such as the Children's Storefront and parent-child centres in Parkdale, Riverdale and other areas; these should be examined and consulted by the Network. The Network should seek to use its resources to ensure that other neighbourhoods in the City are as well-serviced as those which presently benefit from these services. The Network should also

seek to identify and deliver any additional programmes which existing community-based services of this type can utilize.

The implementation of these new Family Centres should be undertaken with the assistance of community development staff time to ensure that the new centres are suitable and accessible to the local population.

The lead department in this initiative is Public Health. It is anticipated that considerable programme assistance will be required from the Parks and Recreation Department and the voluntary sector (perhaps with City Grants support). Other agencies and departments which would be involved include: the two school systems and the public library system.

3. For Families with Children from 5-12 Years

The goal of this initiative is to increase the safety of children who make independent use of the City's streets and services. The necessity and rationale for this goal is found in Section IV of this report.

The safety and security of "middle-sized" children in the City is a source of considerable anxiety and stress to both parents and children. In particular, children and parents fear harassment and assault from older children and adults, confusion and panic when a child gets lost, and danger from vehicles while the child is in transit. Improving children's safety on the streets of the City's neighbourhoods would greatly increase the child's access to 'proxy-parents' and "growing room" and thereby increase the opportunities our urban children have to develop to full potential. This will require several thrusts: education of children; citizen involvement; and, the development of universally-accepted and understood policies for dealing with lost children.

Therefore, this report will recommend that the Commissioner of Planning and Development, the two school systems, the Commissioner of Public Works, the Toronto Transit Commission and the Metropolitan Toronto Police, co-ordinate efforts with community organizations, especially the Block Parents' Association, to develop a comprehensive urban safety programme for children.

4. For Youth

The goal of this initiative is to provide sensitively-designed opportunities for teenagers to make the transition from dependent children to productive adulthood, recognising that the contemporary rapidity of social change and current economic conditions create a very difficult set of circumstances for urban youth. The necessity and rationale for this is discussed in Section IV of this report.

How does the emerging young adult fit into our complex urban society? Jobs are virtually non-existent and organized, productive volunteer programmes are scarce. Relevant officials will be asked to identify possible initiatives in this area which can then be widely discussed with youth in the City through the schools, the community/recreation centres and other places where youth congregate. Options which could be considered include:

a) the initiation of a civic youth volunteer programme which is formally structured to provide valuable pre-work experience and culminates in certification after a certain number of completed training and volunteer hours; and

b) an affirmative action programme to ensure the employment of disadvantaged youth in the City's many casual, parttime and temporary positions.

This report will recommend that these ideas be further examined by appropriate personnel from all levels of government, union representatives and citizen participants, including the City's youth.

VII AN IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The Planning Board Committee on Children's Services proposed (in its reports of November and December, 1982) the creation of a:

- Children's Services Team, comprised of staff to provide for maximum co-ordination between service deliveries to ensure high quality and cost effectiveness;

- Children's Services Council, comprised of community members who use family/children's services to ensure that the needs and requirements of the diverse elements in the City's family population are successfully communicated to the Team and their respective departments/agencies; and

- Children's Services Co-ordinator, a staff person who would serve as liaison between Council and Team and as an advocate for families with children in the City.

This mechanism, comprised of three separate parts, would review and reorient resources and policies to improve services for families with children. The further rationale for each element in the mechanism is contained in the Committee's reports (as early as January, 1982). Having reviewed all this material, I cannot argue with the conclusion of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services that staff (service deliverers) and community (service users) should be brought together, and that co-ordinating assistance (in the form of a staff person) is essential.

However, I do not agree with the implementation of this three-pronged mechanism at this time. I have four basic criticisms of the model developed by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services:

1. Maintaining two separate structures (one for staff and one for the community) with divergent orientations is precarious and unnecessarily complex; ideally, both the users and the providers should be in one group.

2. There is a high level of skepticism among voluntary and public social agency staff about co-ordination efforts aimed at improving services; therefore, the initial projects undertaken should be task-oriented and not encumbered by the public process which would be necessitated by formation of two separate bodies.

3. Over the past decade, residents of the City have been stretched thin through public processes requiring community involvement; therefore, careful analysis of precisely what citizen involvement is required, and at which points, seems both respectful and expedient.

4. The essential premise of this report, as summed up in the Policy Recommendation (No. 1) is that City Council and City Hall should become advocates for families with children; therefore, while staff assistance to achieve specific family-oriented initiatives is required, it would be of an Executive Assistant-type rather than a Co-ordinator/Advocate.

In constructing the alternative implementation process which follows, I have sought to incorporate the following objectives:

1. high-profile political and community leadership;

2. staff commitment to co-ordination;

3. staff-community dialogue;

4. efficient and effective use of everyone's time;

5. identification of the needs of minority ethnic and non-Anglo families;

6. evaluation of the implementation mechanism proposed;

7. evaluation of the three specific initiatives proposed; and

8. provision of adequate resources to support the implementation body, carry out the work identified for the three specific initiatives, and the evaluation processes.

It is hoped that, through presenting a practical but fully-conceived notion of how this implementation mechanism could operate, many of the obstacles which have hindered other co-ordination efforts can be circumvented.

Many such efforts appear to have failed because:

a) there was an initial generality or vagueness in mandate, terms of reference or work priorities; and/or

b) departments/agencies involved did not fully commit themselves to the necessary review and reorientation process; and/or

c) the mechanism proposed did not include a respectful but real opportunity for user involvement in the dialogical process of review and reorientation.

1. The City of Toronto Children's Network

This report will recommend the establishment of an implementation body called the Toronto Children's Network.

The Network will be comprised of a Steering Committee and three project-oriented Committees.

a) The Steering Committee:

The membership of the Steering Committee will consist of:

i) two members of City Council as Co-Chairmen;

ii) senior staff representation from the following City departments:

- Department of Management Services;
- Department of Parks and Recreation;
- Department of Planning and Development; and,
- Department of Public Health;

iii) senior staff or Board representation from the following:

- Metropolitan Separate School Board (Toronto Region);
- Toronto Board of Education; and,
- Toronto Public Library;

iv) three community members (following public nominations and appointment by City Council):

- a Community Advocate for families with children aged 0-5 years;
- a Community Advocate for families with children aged 5-12 years; and,
- a Community Advocate for families with children aged 12-20 years; and,

v) the Mayor as an Ex-officio member.

Recommendation Number 4 deals with the selection of staff and/or Board representation. Recommendation Number 5 speaks to the selection of Community Advocate members for the Network. Each of the Community Advocates will chair a project committee, and will be chosen through the same method used to select citizens for

other City Boards and Commissions: a nomination and interview process. For the first year this process could be undertaken by a subcommittee of the political and staff representatives who comprise the balance of the Steering Committee's membership. The individuals selected through this process would be ratified by City Council prior to appointment to the Network.

The primary responsibility of the Steering Committee is to assist the three project committees in developing and implementing improvements to service as discussed in this report. This includes: ensuring provision of adequate staff and other resources; assistance with community and inter-agency liaison; and maintenance of an atmosphere of dialogue and mutual support for the general goals expressed in Recommendation Number 1.

The Steering Committee may also have a role in responding to the concerns of City Departments, members of City Council and/or the community about other child/family service issues and policy matters.

The Steering Committee will develop and carry out the work plans and evaluation process of the Network, and make recommendations about the value of this body and any further initiatives which would be appropriate.

b) Family Centres Committee:

The membership of this Committee will be as follows:

i)	Chairman:	Community Advocate for 0-5
ii)	Lead Department:	Public Health
iii)	Other Members:	Parks and Recreation
		Public Library
		numerous voluntary and community-based organizations and services
		School boards.

The function of the Family Centres Committee is to implement the improvements proposed in Section VI, Subsection (2): integrated, multi-public-service Family Centres for families with young children.

c) Child Safety and Security Committee:

The membership of this Committee will be as follows:

i)	Chairman:	Community Advocate for 5-12
ii)	Lead Department:	Planning and Development
iii)	Other Members:	Metropolitan Toronto Police
		School Boards
		Toronto Transit Commission
		Public Works

Block Parents' Association and
community-based organizations

The function of this Committee will be to implement the improvements proposed in Section VI, Subsection (3): a comprehensive programme involving education of parents, children and public servants to promote child safety and security on the streets of Toronto.

d) Youth Volunteer and Employment Programmes:

The membership of the Committee will be as follows:

i)	Chairman:	Community Advocate for 12-20
ii)	Lead Department:	Management Services (Equal Opportunity Programme)
iii)	Other Members:	CUPE 43 and 79 Provincial and Federal employment programme officials youth organizations and services relevant commissioners and agency heads

The function of this Committee will be to implement the improvements proposed in Section VI, Subsection (4): volunteer certification programmes providing valuable pre-work experience, and an affirmative action programme for employment aimed at the City's socio-economically disadvantaged youth.

e) Staff Assistance and Other Resources:

During the start-up period for the Network, I am prepared to commit whatever staff time is required to assist the Steering Committee in developing its work programme and forming its project committees. The Steering Committee will make recommendations to City Council on the following resource matters in its first report:

- long-term staff assistance to the Steering Committee;

- honourariums to the Community Advocates in recognition of the extensive time commitment and expertise required to carryout the function of Committee Chairman; and,

- whether any additional programme expenses are anticipated, and the approximate cost and appropriate source of these funds.

As the Network will be a body appointed by City Council, it is appropriate to request the City Clerk to provide the necessary clerical support.

The lead departments identified in each project committee would be expected to handle the clerical, administrative and support

functions for that committee. Obviously, the project committees will require resources to implement the improvements proposed in the three age-related projects. However, it is hoped that primary emphasis will be placed on re-routing existing resources (staff and funds) to achieve these programme objectives. Work is already ongoing with the client groups in most of the subject areas and the purpose of Network is to co-ordinate efforts to maximize results. Therefore, most resources required should be available from existing budgets.

2. A Multicultural Family Advisory Board

In order to ensure that the culture and needs of the City's diverse population of families is adequately reflected in the review of existing services and implementation of new services, formation of a Multicultural Family Advisory Board is suggested.

Once instituted, the Network's Steering Committee will accept recommendations from such sources as:

- the T.B.O.E. Heritage Language Advisory Committee;
- the Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations; and
- the Children's Aid Society of Metropolitan Toronto Task Force on Multicultural Services;

on the matter of appropriate family/child-oriented representation from the City's major cultural and ethnic communities.

The particular role of the Board, and the extent to which it will be used by each Committee, or by the Network as a whole, cannot be determined at this time. However, its creation is recommended "in principle" to ensure that the Network, and its Project Committees, adequately consider and reflect the concerns of the City's minority ethnic and culturally non-Anglo families in both the review and implementation process.

3. Work Programme

The following is an approximate timetable for the first two years of activity of the Network, at the end of which time an avaluation and recommendations from the Steering Committee concerning future work will be presented.

This timetable is based on a realistic assessment of the length of time required to process reports, requests and recommendations through City Council and City Departments. No doubt the involvement of non-City, local-level government agencies will slow down the process slightly but the extent to which this may be so cannot be anticipated at this time. On the other hand, mildly ambitious deadlines are useful as incentives to pushing work of

priority through the various official and bureaucratic steps required. The timetable presented is an attempt to balance these factors and provide a sense for all interested participants of when various things may get done.

a) Months One-to-Three:

Several start-up tasks will be accomplished during this time.

After City Council adopts the Recommendations Nos. 1-18:

- the report will be forwarded to a number of bodies for comment and requesting adoption of the policy statements (Recommendation No. 1);

- departments and boards will be requested to appoint representatives for the Steering Committee;

- the City Clerk will be asked to advertise for Community Advocate position appointments to the Network;

- various agencies and organizations will be asked to comment on the Multicultural Family Advisory Board proposal (or other means of ensuring that the needs of non-white and/or non-Anglo families are represented before the Network); and,

- the Commissioner of Planning and Development will be asked to commit temporary staff resources to assist in this period.

The initial meetings of the Steering Committee would not include the Community Advocates. During these first few meetings, the Steering Committee will:

- hear/consider comments and responses from the agencies and organizations on the report Toronto: A City For Children and on the proposal concerning the Multicultural Family Advisory Board;

- develop selection procedures for the Community Advocates and strike a subcommittee to interview and recommend on appointments to these positions; and,

- forward a report to City Council which recommends ratification of the selected Community Advocates, and which includes:

    . a concise statement of the Network's terms of reference, mandate and structure;

    . a recommendation on administrative resources essential to permit the Network to carryout its functions;

- a recommendation on the matter of honorariums for the Community Advocate positions on the Network; and,

- a recommendation on the appropriate mechanism for ensuring representation from the City's minority ethnocultural communities.

b) Months Four-to-Six:

This period of time will be dedicated to start-up work for the Project Committees. Highest priority, in the event of conflict, will be given to the initiative involving families with children aged 0-5 years (Family Centres).

During month four, the Project Committee Chairmen should be able to meet with the public servants identified for each initiative and determine what community membership is appropriate. Subsequent to this, each Committee should formulate a workplan including:

- terms of reference, mandate and membership;

- goals and objectives;

- means to accomplishing these ends and an approximate timetable of work;

- anticipated resources required (if any); and,

- preliminary thoughts on how to evaluate the effectiveness of the Committee's work.

These Committee workplans should be presented to the Network in the fifth month, and incorporated into the Network's report to City Council during the sixth month.

c) Months Seven-to-Twenty-three:

The Committees will provide the Network with a short report every three months updating the information laid out in the initial Committee workplan and commenting on progress to date. Each report should include a short self-evaluation by the Committee membership.

The Network will report to City Council every six (6) months, and must meet at least every three (3) months to consider the Committee reports. Each Network report to City Council will:

- present an updated workplan for all the Committees with comments on progress to date;

- incorporate the self-evaluation of the Steering Committee on the value of the Network as an experiment in management and service delivery co-ordination to provide more responsive and efficient community services.

d) Month Twenty-four:

At the end of two years, the Steering Committee will present a report on behalf of itself and the Committees which details all work to date and recommends whether or not the Network or a similar public-service co-ordinating body should be continued.

This will be accompanied by an objective evaluation of the Network.

4. Evaluation

As proposed, evaluation of the Network will include self-evaluation in comment form from the members of the three project Committees and the Steering Committee.

A necessary further component is objective evaluation by a non-interested party which should include investigation of the following:

a) effectiveness of co-ordination efforts (from both a department/agency and a community perspective);

b) improvement in services offered (from a community perspective);

c) cost/benefit analysis; and

d) analysis of other factors which hindered or helped the Network and its Committees in achieving the goals established in the initial work plan.

It may be useful to consider augmenting the City's own evaluation capability through the inclusion of research and evaluation expertise from the University of Toronto's Child-In-The-City programme.

"One of the initial decisions reached by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services was to concentrate its efforts at this stage in its own backyard on those areas where it can most reasonably and legitimately expect to get results, in other words, realistic but important changes in the City-funded services for families with children."(*13)

The implementation process outlined in this Section endeavours to make possible the achievement of this general goal. However, it must be mutually recognized by all participants that this is an

initial attempt to develop family support mechanisms which would enhance the living situation and developmental opportunities of all children in the City of Toronto. Because it is new ground with new objectives and priorities, the question to be asked is how to achieve the essential goals ... not just whether any one aspect of these initiatives is a success or failure.

F O O T N O T E S

*1 Canadian Council on Children and Youth; Admittance Restricted: The Child as Citizen in Canada; 1978.

*2 Excerpted from a letter by Robert Couchman, Executive Director of the Family Service Association, in response to, and support of, the recommendations of the P.B.C.C.S.

*3 Garbarino, James, Ph.D; Who Are the Puzzlemasters?; Keynote address to the 1980 Canadian Association for Young Children Conference, Calgary.

*4 Andrews, Howard F., Ph.D; Preventive Interprevention for the Health and Well-Being of Urban Children; Child-in-the-City Report #7, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, December, 1982.

*5 Garbarino; op. cit.

*6 Zinn, Hermann, Ph.D.; The Influence of Home Environments on the Socialisation of Children; Paper presented to the United Nations Man and the Biosphere Symposium on Managing Urban Space in the Interests of Children; 1979.

*7 Michelson, William et al; eds; The Child in the City; University of Toronto Press; 1979: "The Spatial World of the Child" by Kevin Lynch.

*8 Hill, Frederick; The Lives and Times of Urban Adolescents: Activity Patterns and Neighbourhood Perceptions; Child in the City Report #8; Dec.1980.

*9 Lynch, Kevin; Growing Up in Cities; MIT Press, UNESCO, 1977.

*10 See: A Study of Local Parks Outside the Core Area and Issues in Children's Services; both City of Toronto Planning and Development Department; 1980.

*11 Michelson, William, Ph.D; Planning for the Martians in Our Midst; presented to the Congress of Mayors of the World's Major Cities; Apr.1979.

*12 Michelson, William et al; eds; The Child in the City; University of Toronto Press; 1979: "The Child in the City: Continuity and Change in Problems and Programmes since 1875" by Robert H. Bremner.

*13 The Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, (Millie Shime et al); An Evaluation of Children's Services; January, 1982, (emphasis as in original)

APPENDIX "A"

The Work of the
Planning Board Committee on Children's Services

The adoption of the report, Planning in the 80's, on February 25, 1980, expanded the City of Toronto Planning Board's mandate to concern itself with the "social health of the City". In specific, this document, which set out a framework for the planning issues requiring attention during the 1980's, cited the importance of "monitoring demographic changes as they relate to services", including "services to children".

During the summer of 1980, the late Millie Shime asked the members of the Planning Board to consider tackling the social planning issues related to services for children in the City. The Planning Board then requested staff from the Planning and Development Department to prepare a background report for their consideration. This report, Issues in Children's Services, was presented to the Board on November 17, 1980, at which time the Board decided to strike a Committee dealing specifically with the issues related to children's services in the City of Toronto.

A. P.B.C.C.S.: Phase I (November, 1980 - January, 1982)

During this period of time, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services reached several fundamental conclusions about the importance of improving services for families with children, and the manner in which this should be approached. The essence of these conclusions is embodied in the January, 1982, report from the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services entitled, An Evaluation of Children's Services:

1. It is critically important to review and reorient services for families with children in the City because of:

   - the dramatic overall decline in child population which threatens the social fabric of the City; and

   - the large number of children in the City who are 'at risk' (i.e., live in situations which put 'at risk' the child's capacity to develop to the peak of his/her potential).

2. To meet the doubled-edge objectives for improving services (i.e., for the children and for the City), it is necessary to focus on the needs of all families with children. In reorientation of services, particular regard must be paid to the development of family support programmes which compensate for:

- the changing nature of the nuclear family; and
- modern urban stresses on the family.

3. Co-ordination between service providers is particularly relevant during times of financial restraint to ensure that the services delivered are of high quality and as cost effective as possible.

4. User involvement is critical to the effective review and reorientation of services because of:

   - the rapidity and ongoing nature of changes in family demographics; and
   - the need to create a feeling of community among City families.

5. It is most productive to begin this review and reorientation by looking at the services provided or funded directly by local-level government (e.g., library, parks and recreation, public health, school systems, etc.) because of:

   - the substantial resources allocated to thse service agencies; and
   - the traditional responsiveness of local-level government.

   In order to achieve this, City Council must make a public commitment that this work has a high priority. This would be most readily and effectively conveyed through the appointment of a central staff person who functions as an advocate for families with children and also as a co-ordinator of local-level government service providers.

6. The initiation of this review and reorientation should be guided by the following:

   - utilize an age-related approach as the needs and situations of families change as the children mature;
   - implement improvements on a City-wide basis because a geographic pilot-project approach has inherent difficulcies due to the diversity of the City's population and neighbourhoods; and
   - show as much regard to accessibility, promotion and outreach to/for the diversity of the City's population as to the actual content of the services.

In addition, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services devoted considerable attention to the proposal by Metropolitan

Toronto to establish a Metropolitan Toronto Children's Council. This Council, unlike the one proposed by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services, was conceived as a voluntary federation of major service providers (similar in some ways to the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services' proposed Team) which would meet on a regular basis to liaise, consult, review and co-ordinate services. (Recently Metro decided not to implement this Council but to opt for a smaller, issue-focussed approach. In June, 1983, Neighbourhoods Committee of City Council received the report from the Metro Commissioner of Community Services outlining the new concept.)

B. P.B.C.C.S.: Phase II (January, 1982 - December, 1982)

During 1982, the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services engaged in the bulk of its consultation process and refined the eleven proposals in An Evaluation of Children's Services to the three recommendations set out in the Final Recommendations report. As stated in this latter document:

> "Although the Committee sees the document entitled An Evaluation of Children's Services as its more complete statement on what needs to be done to improve services for families with children, at this point it has concentrated its efforts on the question of creation of the Children's Services Council, the Children's Services Team and the Children's Services Co-ordinator."

The Planning Board Committee on Children's Services believed that once these three recommendations were implemented, the many problems and issues identified to and by the Committee could be dealt with successfully. Therefore, Final Recommendations proposes the establishment of a three-pronged mechanism to review and reorient the services presently provided by local-level government for families with children:

1. A Children's Council - a mechanism for community participation in the design, co-ordination and implementation of services for families with children;

2. A Children's Service Team - a team of representatives from major local-level government agencies and departments to co-ordinate service delivery and respond to community proposals; and

3. A Children's Services Co-ordinator - a City Hall advocate for families with children and the convenor of the Children's Services Team.

The response to these three recommendations was virtually unanimous, including the comments made at the February 27, 1983,

meeting of Neighbourhoods Committee when the Final Recommendations report was discussed.

1. The nature of the total package of material prepared by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services over its two years of operation (totalling some 172 pages) made it difficult to follow the steps which the Committee used to reach its conclusions.

2. Notwithstanding the above, serious problems and issues have been identified by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services. These conditions have concrete negative effects on many children in the City (i.e., there are many children/families 'at risk' who are not reached by available services).

3. City Council, in co-operation with other local-level public bodies, may be able to play a useful role in addressing these issues and problems in a co-ordinated, comprehensive and child/family-oriented manner. If it is possible to do something about these matters, then it should be attempted.

4. The three-pronged mechanism proposed by the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services is structurally sound for achieving this goal, but, because of its apparent deficiency in terms of 'content goals' (i.e., what concretely will be done? for whom? when? how? where?) there is a real danger of creating a community-bureaucracy tangle and wrangle in which nothing substantial will be achieved.

Overall, the vast majority of those consulted were positive about the Final Recommendations of the Planning Board Committee on Children's Services with the caveat expressed in Point #4 above.

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL